

COMMENTARY

NO GERMAN REARMING WITHOUT ATLANTIC UNION

Europe Alone Cannot Assimilate German Power

RICHARD H. S. CROSSMAN

ONE COMMON characteristic of the British and American approach to politics is the illusion that no problem is really insoluble. If only people will be reasonable, we fondly believe, if only all sides will be ready to "forget their nationalist obsessions" and "reach a sensible compromise," any conflict can be resolved without war or violence.

This illusion is natural enough in a people which is geographically secure, enjoys a well-established, democratic pattern of life, and knows that, in any international dispute that vitally concerns it, the compromise will always be of its own making. Neither Britain

nor the United States has ever lost a major war. Hence the widespread delusion that war settles nothing and that no one is the winner. Nor has either nation, in any post-war settlement, been compelled to sacrifice a vital national interest for what its allies assert to be the common good, as France was compelled to at Versailles, Czechoslovakia at Munich, and pre-Communist Poland at Yalta. It is easy to believe that every problem is soluble, as long as others bear the brunt of your solution!

In the Washington talks of the Western foreign ministers, in October, on the future of Germany, and in the more recent conversations in London, this Anglo-Saxon illusion has been once again very much in evidence. Mr. Acheson obviously found the French attitude to Germany intensely irritating. Why should M. Schuman be so unwilling to take Mr. Churchill's chivalrous advice that he should forget old scores and accept the Germans as comrades in arms? Was it not obvious that the new threat from the East had made the Franco-German feud a sheer anachronism? Was it not a proven fact of military logistics that Europe is indefensible unless German contingents are added to its defense, and the German economy harnessed to the democratic war machine? Would it not be possible, with a little good will on the part of the French,

A RECENT New York Times dispatch from London opened as follows: "Representatives of the twelve North Atlantic Treaty powers agreed today on the need for speed in settling the question of Germany's participation in the defense of Western Europe. They did not immediately agree on anything else." And thereby hangs a tale which RICHARD H. S. CROSSMAN here relates. For, on the whole controversial question of German rearmament, there seem to be only two certainties: that it is a matter of some urgency and that the Western powers are at an impasse before it. Mr. Crossman proposes a way out of the impasse. Mr. Crossman, a Labor member of Parliament, contributes frequently to this magazine, the *New Statesman and Nation*, and other periodicals. His latest article in COMMENTARY was "Nationalism: Enemy or Ally?" in the July 1950 issue.

to make the Germans full partners in the Atlantic Union?

All these rhetorical questions sound reasonable enough three thousand miles across the Atlantic. Thirty years ago similar questions were being asked twenty miles across the Channel. Then it was the British who were infuriated at the French intransigence which culminated in 1923 in the military occupation of the Ruhr. From our insular position of security in the pre-atomic 1920's, we viewed the traditional feuds of Western Europe with the detached irritation that Americans feel today. What we failed to realize, in framing the Treaty of Versailles, was that the interests of Germany and her neighbors cannot be reconciled in terms of Europe.

With the United States still isolationist, the choice in 1918 was between a peace treaty which gave German democracy a reasonable chance to survive, at the cost of jeopardizing French security, or else the Carthaginian peace which the French desired. You could be just *either* to the French *or* to the Germans, and the compromise which Lloyd George actually made between these conflicting claims achieved the worst of both worlds. Germany democracy was compelled to accept the stigma of war guilt and to sign a treaty which, in the case of Silesia, clearly violated the principles of national self-determination. In signing this treaty, the Weimar politicians paved the way for Hitlerism. But, simultaneously, the British refusal to permit the French to annex the German provinces west of the Rhine made France indefensible against a renascent Germany and sowed the seeds of that French defeatism which culminated in Munich. The Versailles Treaty, in fact, was a typical piece of Anglo-Saxon common sense, acceptable neither to France nor to Germany. We English learnt our lesson, but not in time to prevent World War II. The question is whether, in our present generation, the United States can do better—whether, to be precise, Mr. Acheson can avoid the pitfall, into which Lloyd George fell, of forcing on Europe a “settlement” of the German problem which makes no sense to Europeans.

EVERYONE now accepts Goethe's dictum that two souls dwell in the German breast. They are at once respectable bourgeois, with a love of family and home, and jack-booted SS men, reveling in the extermination camp. They are a law-abiding people with a fine tradition of administrative justice, and yet they can display the contempt for law of Nietzsche's superman. They have a genuine respect for learning and culture, and yet they will suddenly smash both in an ecstasy of barbarism. It would be pleasant to believe, as some liberals and socialists have done, that these conflicting characteristics are neatly divided between “good” and “bad” Germans, between Prussians and non-Prussians, or between militarist Junkers and a democratic working class. But there is little evidence for such a simplified picture. The “good Germany” and the “bad Germany” are abstractions. The *real* Germany is a divided personality, exhibiting the characteristics of both, and the problem we face is to create conditions in which this spiritual conflict can be resolved into a stable national temperament without another world war.

What we often fail to realize is that this German schizophrenia has its counterpart in our own attitude to Germany. We swing within a few years from a hysterical anti-Germanism to a sentimental belief that the Germans are really just like ourselves. In 1916 anybody with a German name in London was in danger of physical assault. Five years later British public opinion was blaming the French for not accepting Germany as a civilized democracy. The second mood was just as irrational and unbalanced as the first. Since 1944 American public opinion has undergone a similar experience: in 1950 the French are being bitterly blamed for holding views about German militarism and aggressiveness which American public opinion would have condemned as too “soft” four years ago.

I shall never forget the autumn day of 1944 when we received in SHAEF the terse telegram which informed us of the conclusions reached by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill at the Quebec Conference. They

had just initialed the Morgenthau Plan, and its immediate practical result was a two-clause directive to General Eisenhower. The first clause enforced the policy of non-fraternization; the second instructed us only to undertake such economic reconstruction in the occupied areas of Germany as was necessary to prevent starvation and insurrection. This directive arrived when the main plans for Military Government had already been worked out on the assumption that occupation policy would follow the principles established in Italy. The aim would be to get the economy running again as soon as possible and, while removing Nazis from their jobs, to permit friendly relations both between the troops and the civil population, and between Military Government and the Germans with whom they would be working. The new directive based on the Morgenthau Plan made all these plans waste-paper and forced upon the British and American occupying forces a policy which violated every natural instinct of human decency and stimulated the worst in all of us. We were to behave as a *Herrenvolk*. Our only human relations with the Germans were to be illicit sexual intercourse or black market activities, and we were to re-educate them in democracy by keeping them just above the level of starvation, while systematically destroying the industries on which their livelihood depended.

British colonialism at its worst, with its segregation of pukka sahibs in their exclusive white man's clubs, and its frigid disdain for the social aspirations of the lesser breeds outside the law, became the model for the Anglo-American occupation of Western Germany. Any Tanganyika settler who, as lately as 1948, visited the American fortress in Frankfort—half a square mile of residential suburb surrounded by barbed wire and nicknamed "KZ Amerika" ("the American concentration camp") by the Germans—would have felt perfectly at home.

When Mr. Acheson now calls on the Europeans to treat the Germans as fellow defenders of Christendom, he should remember the Morgenthau Plan imposed as

a code of conduct only two years ago. It is easy to forget the contrast in the atmosphere of Washington; but the fact that America within six years has imperiously proposed both the Morgenthau Plan and the remilitarization of the German state is bound to be taken in Europe as evidence of a fundamental instability in the American attitude to Germany. If Mr. Acheson finds the French "difficult," he should remember that they at least have the virtue of consistency, whereas American policy towards Germany displays the same ambivalence which made British opinion the prime obstacle to a sound European settlement after World War I.

OUR first task is to get rid of this emotional unbalance by seeing the Germans as they really are. They are neither the eternal enemy, to be eradicated mercilessly by a Morgenthau Plan, nor are they decent, reliable fellows who can be armed without hesitation. The characteristics which make them both an asset and a danger to Europe are derived not from original sin but from their national history, which has set them three problems that no other nation has had to solve.

1. THE NATION WITHOUT FRONTIERS. In the first place, the Germans are not, as they fondly believe, a *Volk ohne Raum*, but they are a *Volk ohne Grenzen*. Like the Poles, they are a people with no naturally defined living space. The French, the British, and the American ways of life are coterminous with the frontiers of three well-defined states. The frontiers of Germany must always be artificial, and to make matters worse, if all Germans are to live in a single nation-state, that state will include vast numbers of non-German national minorities. The Austrians, the Germans who used to live in Poland and Czechoslovakia, in Hungary and Rumania, are all just as German as the inhabitants of Frankfort or Berlin, though they have lived for hundreds of years in countries which were not part of a German Reich. When Bismarck unified Germany he did it arbitrarily and from above, by

creating a Prussian-dominated German state which excluded the whole Austro-Hungarian Empire. When the Treaty of Versailles recarved Germany's frontiers, it excluded still more millions of Germans; and when National Socialism, under the slogan "*ein Reich, ein Volk, ein Fuehrer*," finally created the German nation-state, it could do so only by subjecting the whole of Europe to Hitler's rule. When a Frenchman or an Englishman demands national self-determination, he may do so without aggressively threatening his neighbors. When a German does so, he menaces every Pole, Czech, Hungarian, Frenchman, Dutchman, and Belgian. The other nations of Europe can only feel secure if they prevent the Germans from achieving their national ambitions. If the Germans are to unite, and to inhabit all the territories where they historically belong, they can only do so by aggression.

This fact—that Germany is a nation without frontiers—explains another characteristic of German policy, its "neutrality" towards East and West. Shall Germany achieve her aims by alliance with Russia against the Western powers, or by defending Western Christendom against the Mongolian hordes? Or shall she, as Hitler tried, make a tactical alliance with the East in order to destroy the West and then fulfill her destiny by conquering the East as well? The question whether Germany should be "East- or West-oriented" has been the basic issue for German politicians ever since Bismarck. It should not be confused with any ideological difference between democracy and totalitarianism, or between Catholicism and Marxism. As a matter of fact, the most influential proponents of an East orientation in the 1920's were the Reichswehr generals, who certainly had no predilection for Communism but were ready to collaborate with the Russians in order to evade the restrictions on German rearmament imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. On the other side, the main protagonists of a West orientation have always been the Social Democrats, owing to their strong spiritual affinity with British and French democracy.

But in Germany, because she is still a nation striving for self-determination, ideology will always take second place to national expediency. In signing that 1939 pact with Stalin, Hitler had the support of the German General Staff and of German heavy industry. Through that pact he obtained the partition of Poland and the German domination of Central Europe, which had been the ambition of German nationalists for generations.

Today, when eight million Germans have been expelled from their homes in Poland and Czechoslovakia, it still remains true that, if the West is unable or unwilling to satisfy German aspirations, many Germans of the Right, though they detest Communism, might be tempted, under certain conditions, to adopt an East orientation. That is why Germany can never be treated as a wholly reliable ally.

2. MANAGERIAL CAPITALISM. Ever since the war, frantic efforts have been made by the American and British occupation authorities to "democratize" the German economy in order to prevent a revival of Hitlerism. The Americans have been chiefly concerned to break up the mammoth cartels, in accordance with the principles of the Sherman anti-trust laws. The British Labor government has dallied ineffectively with the idea that socialization is the cure. Both remedies are bound to fail because you cannot democratize a foreign country by forcing it into the laws of your own historical development.

The German industrial revolution was unnaturally retarded to the end of the 19th century, with the result that German capitalism sprang, like the goddess Athena, fully grown and fully armed from the head of Zeus. The German middle class did not win its place in the sun by a democratic revolution but remained the servant of a huge economic machine, subservient to the requirements of the state and of the military power which controlled it. From its beginning in 1870, German industry has been a managerial society economically "trustified" and

organized by the state as an instrument of national ambition. Owing to Bismarck's farsightedness, Germany had also become a "welfare state" long before the phrase was thought of in Britain or America. But it has been a welfare state on a strictly military pattern. You can see this clearly if you glance either at its trade unionism or at the ethics of the German businessman overseas. The trade union secretary is the non-commissioned officer in a Marxist army, and the German commercial traveler is the representative not only of his firm but of the Reich.

Once again, it is no use blaming the Germans or trying forcibly to reshape their industrial life on a British or American pattern. On the other hand, it is futile to overlook the fact that German economic recovery constitutes a threat not merely to Germany's commercial competitors, but to the national existence of her neighbors.

3. **AUTHORITARIAN DEMOCRACY.** Soon after the war I visited Düsseldorf and Frankfurt, to study re-education. At Düsseldorf I found the British busily engaged in democratizing German local government. The first step, I was told, was to create a non-political civil service and, in particular, to force the Germans to accept a "town clerk" as the head of the municipal service. In England the mayoralty goes in rotation among the elected councillors, and the town clerk is the non-political civil servant responsible to him for coordinating every department. The German tradition, on the other hand, has always been that the party which won the election should select a burgomaster, a political official who combines the offices of both the British mayor and town clerk. When I asked the occupation authorities why they considered a town clerk so essential to democracy, they replied, "It's the way we've always done it," apparently unaware that this is a peculiar British convention which no other democracy has adopted.

In Frankfurt I found the Americans busily engaged in democratizing the German press by establishing it on a commercial basis and

preventing the formation of party-political newspapers. When I asked them why they thought a commercial press was democratic, I was asked to look at the press of the United States. They had not noticed that a party-political press is an established feature of European democracy.

The moral of this story is clear. A democracy, to be genuine, must be the organic expression of the popular will. Democratic institutions cannot be imposed by an occupying army, nor can totalitarianism be exterminated by making everyone fill out long and complicated forms. The Russians had a simple task. Their aim was to substitute one totalitarian system for another. So the Socialist Unity party in Eastern Germany is merely the Nazi party with a few changes of personnel and a new directive. In the Western zones it was presumably our purpose to enable the Germans to evolve their own uniquely German form of representative government. What that will be no one can predict, but we can say one thing with certainty: it will not follow the British, the American, or the French pattern.

The genuine ideal for most Germans is the *Rechtsstaat*, the state administered according to strict justice by an incorruptible civil service, in which the rights of the individual are ruthlessly subsumed to the common good. Sovereignty, in the German mind, derives not from the surge of public feeling below, but from an authority far above the common man. That authority may be checked, and to some extent controlled, by public opinion, but if it is to be respected it can never be a product of public opinion. The result, therefore, of forcing on Germany a democratic system on the British or American pattern will only be to produce a reaction in favor of extreme forms of totalitarianism, such as occurred in the 1920's. Indeed, the beginning of wisdom on this matter is to realize that the best constitution Germany ever achieved was the mixture of authority and representative government under Wilhelm II. If, instead of the Weimar Republic, Germany had developed a constitutional monarchy,

the Hitler revolution might never have occurred. It is far too late today to talk about restoring monarchy in Germany. But some other form of authoritarian democracy must be found if freedom is to be stabilized in that country.

Of the three Western powers, it is only the French who have shown any understanding of these three aspects of the German problem. They entered Germany as victors and not as re-educators; their prime object was to grab as much reparations as they could, and to annex the Saar while the United States was still in its anti-German mood. They recognize that no one can democratize the Germans except the Germans themselves, and that the attempt to replace the "bad" Germans with "good" Germans throughout the administration of their zones was bound to end in a welter of mismanagement and hypocrisy.

The French occupation policy was cynical and overtly vindictive. But it was at least intelligible to the German mind, which recognizes the victor's right to loot. I doubt whether the French are more resented today in Germany than the British or the Americans.

SO FAR I have written about Germany as though it were still a united nation. But the fact, as we all know, is that it is artificially divided into two states. When we talk of the Germans, we too easily forget that the Western Germans are not a nation but a fragment of a nation, whose primary objective must be: German unity. To give the Bonn government independence means giving it the power to work for the national ambitions of all Germans.

But Germany is not only divided: it is also dismembered. This is the tragic legacy of Yalta. Roosevelt and Churchill permitted Poland and Russia to acquire vast areas of purely German territory and to expel nine million Germans from their homes. It was a gross violation of democratic principle and human decency which, directly they are strong enough, the Germans must seek to redress. To take a parallel from my own country, it is as though we had lost the war

and Britain had been divided into German, Italian, and Japanese zones of occupation. Then we must assume that, within five weeks of the end of a devastating war, the whole population of Australia had been bundled into Britain. If all this had happened, I fancy that most of the inhabitants of this island would be determined to liberate Australia, if only to liberate themselves from the unwelcome Australians. Today no German, whatever his political party, will be content so long as Königsberg remains a Russian city and Breslau is called Wroclaw; and that means that nationalism must be the dominant force in German politics.

To achieve an Eastern dismemberment, while preventing a Western dismemberment such as the French desired, was one of the most brilliant achievements of Stalin's diplomacy. In the short run it meant that Russia's Slavic allies were satiated, while our Western European allies remained in chronic insecurity. In the long run, if Stalin ever wants the Germans as allies, it gives him the chance of winning them by yet another partition of Poland.

On the other hand, the Western powers have one advantage in Germany which they could never have anticipated—the effect produced by the Russian occupation. Both in the West and in the East the Germans have conceived a hatred of the Russians which it is impossible to overestimate. Mainly this is the result of the brutality of the Russian occupying forces in the first months after the war. But it is also in part caused by the instability which the Soviets, no less than ourselves, display in their German policy.

The Russians want to win the Germans as allies against the West. But they cannot welcome the Germans too warmly as proletarian comrades without deeply disturbing the whole Slav bloc. The Poles and the Czechs are as frightened of a German revival as the French, and the recent crisis in the Polish Communist party, which ended with the purge of Gomulka, was almost certainly due to disagreements about Germany. In the last resort, the Kremlin has to choose between the support of Germany and the

support of the Slavs. Unwilling to make this choice, it vacillates.

Moreover, the Russians still want loot. In 1945 and 1946 they almost stripped the Eastern Zone, and since then there have been further waves of dismantling. There are factories in Saxony which have been dismantled four, five, and six times. Eastern Germany is still an area of colonial exploitation, and this exploitation, combined with forced labor in the uranium mines, forced service in the East German police force, and an NKVD reign of terror which may mean Siberia for anyone at any time, outweighs in the German mind the social and economic reforms carried through under Communist directive. In Eastern Germany there has been real land redistribution, a genuine equalization of incomes, and a considerable degree of nationalization. But these advances are obliterated in the German mind by the totalitarian colonialism of Russian policy.

IT SHOULD be clear by now that, under present conditions, every "solution" of the German problem can be shot to pieces by those who dislike it. Let us take the French position first. Most Frenchmen are frankly opposed to any kind of German rearmament. They wish to maintain permanent Allied occupation of Western Germany, and they demand sufficient British and American divisions to make the recruitment of Germans unnecessary. To this proposal Mr. Acheson has objected (1) that, even if the United States and Britain quadrupled their present forces in Germany, Western Europe would be militarily indefensible without active German participation, and (2) that anyway neither the United States nor Britain is prepared to go on bearing forever the costs and burdens of defending Western Germany while the Germans themselves go scot free.

In view of the American attitude, supported somewhat half-heartedly by Great Britain, the French have retreated from their first intransigent position. They now concede that German contingents could be used on one condition. This condition is that a European army should be constituted,

responsible to a European minister of defense, and that the Council of Europe should be immediately transformed into the nucleus of a European government. "Create a Federated States of Western Europe," they say, "and we will concede equality to Germany."

On paper, this is a powerful argument. If Western Germany could become merely one state in a larger political union, the menace of German nationalism would be largely removed. Ever since M. Briand sketched his plan for a United Europe in the 1920's, far-sighted Frenchmen have advocated this solution. Unfortunately, at present it is even more unrealistic than the first French proposal. Even if we grant the desirability of merging Western Europe and Britain in a superstate, the job will take years to do. To make the defense of Europe wait upon the complete solution of one of the most difficult of all political problems (in which the interests of the British Commonwealth and of France are diametrically opposed) is to court defeat. Mr. Acheson may sympathize with the French longing for a European Federation. But he realizes that at the very best it is a long-term policy, and what is needed today are short-term measures to deal with the immediate threat of Russian aggression, and to re-moralize those millions of defeatists in Western Europe who, assuming that nothing can prevent the Red Army reaching the Channel coast, have lost their will to resist. This second French proposal may be logical, but it is not practical politics.

IF BOTH the French proposals can be dismissed, what about the American counter-plan? Mr. Acheson has been using all the pressure of which the United States is capable to persuade Western Europe that Germany should be accepted as rapidly as possible as an equal member of the Atlantic community, and required to contribute a contingent to a European army. At first sight this sounds like sheer common sense, but on reflection we see that it is open to just as serious objections as the French viewpoint. Despite the polite phrases about "German contingents in a European army," no one

can seriously doubt that the American plan would involve, within a very few years, the constitution of a German army. This army would be officered by men we were condemning as war criminals only two or three years ago, and its creation would be passionately opposed by every German democrat and socialist. To rearm the Germans now would mean giving back political power to the very forces in Germany which we fought two world wars to destroy, and there is no guarantee that, when this army was reconstituted, it would fight on our side.

But there is an even more serious objection to the American plan. To talk about "rearming the Germans" is to evade the central problem. It was possible in 1945 to impose unconditional surrender on the Germans: it is not possible in 1950 to impose unconditional rearmament upon them. The more loudly American generals talk about the indispensability of German forces for the defense of Western Europe, the more reluctant Germans become to accept the role allotted to them in American strategy. We talk glibly about the defense of the Elbe line, but the Germans are well aware that, in the event of war, the European army, even if it were strongly constituted, would have to make a fighting withdrawal from the Elbe across Western Germany. "You permitted the Russians to advance deep into the heart of Europe," says the German. "You partitioned our country, smashed our cities to pieces, and dismantled our industries. The responsibility for defending Western Europe rests not on us, but on those who brought us to our present desperate plight."

It is now only too clear that the American pressure for German rearmament has been interpreted in Germany as a sign of Western weakness. So far from being grateful to us for wanting to put them into uniform again, the Germans are cynically contemptuous. They will only consent to rearm themselves on their own terms, and the more urgently we ask for their help, the more exorbitant those terms will be.

Finally, there is an objection which every

responsible French and German politician must make: that the rearming of Germany might well provoke the Russian aggression which it is intended to prevent. If the United States is so anxious that Europe should take the risk of precipitating war, what guarantee can Mr. Acheson give that during the critical period when the rearmament is still in process, Allied strength will be sufficient to meet this risk? It is argued, therefore, that during this period the Americans and the British must put into Germany enough troops to reduce the danger to a minimum. In this case, the rearming of the Germans, so far from reducing the number of British and American divisions required for Western European defense, would actually increase it.

IS THERE any way out of this impasse? Only if we realize the mistakes which got us into it and set about rectifying them at once. In the first place, it was a grave tactical error for Washington to raise the issue of German rearmament at a time when it was still academic. Even if the principle is conceded to Mr. Acheson, as Mr. Bevin has reluctantly conceded it, there is no prospect for months, if not years, of forming any German divisions and equipping them. No one in the Pentagon denies that in rearmament the West Germans must come last in the queue. Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, and Italy, not to mention the Middle East, where the military danger is probably most acute, must receive priority in the supply of equipment; and furthermore the whole system of Atlantic defense, which today is little more than a hierarchy of paper-producing committees, must be made to work before German rearmament can become a practical issue. By putting it on the agenda long before anything can be done about it, the United States has caused heart-burnings and dissensions in Europe for no good purpose whatsoever. If Mr. Acheson thought that, by so doing, he could at least win German good will, he must be a very disillusioned man today.

But the blame does not rest only on

American shoulders: a large part of it belongs to Britain, owing to her ambiguous attitude to Western Europe. There are sound reasons why Mr. Churchill, just as strenuously as Mr. Bevin, opposes British participation in a European Federation. Britain is the banker of the sterling area, in which over half of world trade is conducted. Her economic recovery, and her success this year in bridging the dollar gap, is largely due to the dollars which the sterling area *as a whole* has earned, and the economies in dollar imports which the members of the sterling area have imposed upon themselves. To enter a European Federation would mean either forcing the countries of Western Europe into the sterling area (which is the last thing they want) or breaking the area up, which would have catastrophic results for the British people.

Britain is also the head of a Commonwealth based on the principles of national self-determination and progressive decentralization. Whereas France, for instance, seeks to raise the living standards of the backward peoples in her colonies by turning them gradually into Frenchmen, and even in some cases giving them representation in the French parliament, Britain has adopted the opposite approach. She has systematically weakened the control of Westminster over the Empire, and hurried territory after territory towards national independence. India, Pakistan, and Ceylon are now sovereign nations alongside Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and within ten years the West Indies, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast will have achieved the same status of sovereign states, bound together solely by loyalty to the symbol of Commonwealth unity, the British monarchy. For Britain to merge her sovereignty in Europe would be to destroy the last ties of Commonwealth, the common loyalty to the symbol of unity—the British Crown.

These are powerful reasons for British opposition to the French demand for Federation. But they do not excuse Britain's insular attitude since 1945. If Britain cannot accept European Union, what positive pro-

posal of her own has she to put forward for dealing with the German problem? It is not good enough to point to the vast amount of practical cooperation which Britain has shown in such an organization as the European Payments Union, and in her decision to institute a two-year period of conscript service as a contribution to European defense. What Europe needs above all is an inspiring lead, and it has not come from London.

I BELIEVE that the lead which Britain should give to Europe is to enlarge its vision and to make Frenchmen realize that, in the modern world, European Union is a parochial concept. Both Europe's economic problems and the political problem of German nationalism can only be overcome in a union which transcends the frontiers of Europe. *It is the participation in Europe on a permanent peacetime basis of Britain, the United States, and Canada which is required to give France the security without which she cannot tolerate a German revival.*

Marshall Plan aid has provided evidence enough that any European economic revival, to be more than a flash in the pan, must be based on a permanent transatlantic plan for dealing with the dollar shortage. Moreover, we have already recognized that European defense must be organized not in European but in Atlantic terms. During the war, we developed, in the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the combined commodity boards at Washington, effective instruments of world planning. In 1945 most of this complex organization was scrapped, along with wartime controls. But, under the pressure of a cold war, they must be reconstituted. Strategically, politically, and economically, Atlantic Union is the smallest unit of organization which offers any chance of survival for Western democracy.

It is Britain's task, as the power which is both a part of Europe and the center of a world organization, to make all this clear both to the peoples of Western Europe and to the United States of America. If the British government refuses to join a Euro-

pean Schuman Plan, it should be ready to put forward a Bevin Plan which would integrate the coal and steel of every Atlantic power. If she frustrates the French demand for European Union, she should herself show the way to a political union which includes Western Europe, the Commonwealth, and the United States.

In doing this, Britain would provide the basis for a long-term solution of the German problem. Ever since Bismarck it has been insoluble *in terms of Europe*. As Marshal Foch drily remarked when he was asked what was wrong with the Germans, "There are too many of them." By their numbers, by their geographical dispersal, by their energy and authoritarian discipline, they have upset the balance of Europe for a hundred years, and been the cause of two world wars. In both wars it has been necessary to bring in the New World to redress the balance of the Old. After each war the idealists have imagined that one could transcend German nationalism by Europeanizing the Germans; but in fact, as we have seen, they would merely Germanize Europe. Atlantic Union provides the only framework within which Germany could be free without being a menace to her neighbors. If Europe is too small to digest Germany, the Western world is not.

IT CAN be objected that Atlantic Union is just as visionary as the French plan for European Union. It is not something which can be achieved at a round table conference in Washington or by a Constituent Assembly and an Atlantic Constitution. It must grow slowly, over a period of years, as a result of practical successes in Atlantic co-operation, and the political act of union can only be envisaged as the remote final stage in this process of growing together.

This is all true. Yet the fact remains that Atlantic cooperation would be vastly easier if Europe, the Commonwealth, and the United States all formally and solemnly agreed on the common end we are striving to achieve. I should like to see Britain propose the establishment of an Atlantic Consultative

Assembly, on the lines of the European Assembly, and give it all the fanatical backing which the French have devoted to Strasbourg. Atlantic Union and European Union are not alternative but complementary concepts, and I believe the response in both Europe and the United States to such a British initiative would surprise us all. At long last Europeans, Americans, Asiatics, and Africans would be united on equal terms in a single organization; and millions of frightened people would feel that we were beginning to build the foundations of that world government which is the only final solution of our problems, and the only effective bulwark against world Communism. In this world perspective we could at last view the German problem in its proper proportions.

BUT even if we accept this long-term plan, it is essential to reach agreement on the immediate contribution which Germany should be asked to make towards the defense of the West. Here again, there is a chance for a British initiative to bridge the gap between the French and American viewpoints. The French refuse to consider any German unit larger than a battalion; the Americans any unit smaller than a division; and the Germans will accept nothing less than complete equality of treatment. One way out of this deadlock is to drop all talk of a European army—a misleading concept anyway—and to concentrate on defense measures which can be carried out at once. We should relieve French anxieties by organizing our Atlantic army without German participation. On the other hand, we should relieve the natural alarm of the Germans by permitting them to organize at once a militarized police force as strong as the *Bereitschaften* now in existence in the Russian Zone. But, just as these *Bereitschaften* are not units in an integrated East European army, the West German police force should remain a strictly German affair. Meanwhile, the West German state should be permitted to develop as rapidly as possible all the other institutions of an independent nation.

I do not suggest that this proposal is anything else than a stopgap. If the cold war continues at its present intensity for five or ten years, the two rival German police forces will ultimately be integrated into the two rival armies. But, from the French point of view, the integration of the Germans into an extremely strong Atlantic army, organized within the framework of a rapidly developing Atlantic Union, would be far more palatable than Mr. Acheson's present plan to organize ten German divisions in order to fill the gaps caused by our own weakness. I believe that such a police force would also be palatable to the Western Germans. The responsibility for the defense of Western Germany against the Red Army would remain that of the occupying powers, and the Germans would only be concerned with suppressing Communist insurrection and deterring the East German *Bereitschaften* from any "Korean" experiments.

Finally, this stopgap measure would provide time and opportunity for negotiation with the Russians. In Eastern Europe, the Kremlin is faced with just the same dissensions about Germany which harass Mr. Acheson in Washington. The Poles remember that Stalin partitioned their country

in order to avert a German attack on Russia, and they are well aware that the stronger Germany grows, the greater the temptation for the Russians to repeat the partition of Poland. Their reluctance to see East Germany integrated as an equal partner in Eastern Europe is reflected in varying degrees throughout the Slav bloc.

By making it clear to the Russians that we shall permit the West Germans whatever military organization they concede to the East Germans, we are therefore creating the basis for a hardheaded deal between East and West, under which each side would agree to keep its zone of Germany demilitarized.

Such an agreement, if achieved, could lead to a general *détente* throughout the world. We should not assume it to be likely, but we should be well advised not to destroy the opportunity for it. Once we integrate the Germans into a European army, we make impossible either the unification of Germany, except after a world war, or an agreement with Russia for the demilitarization of both zones. To take this irrevocable step at a time when it brings no increase of military strength, and at the risk of the gravest dissensions among our allies, is surely an act of irresponsibility.